



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation

DATE: July 12, 2011

SUBJECT: BZA Application No. 18236 – Request for a special exception under § 206 to continue the use of an existing playing field for a private school at 3637 Patterson Street, N.W.

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the requested special exception pursuant to §§ 206 and 31041.1 to continue the playing field use for a private school, subject to the conditions listed at the end of this report.

II. AREA AND SITE DESCRIPTION

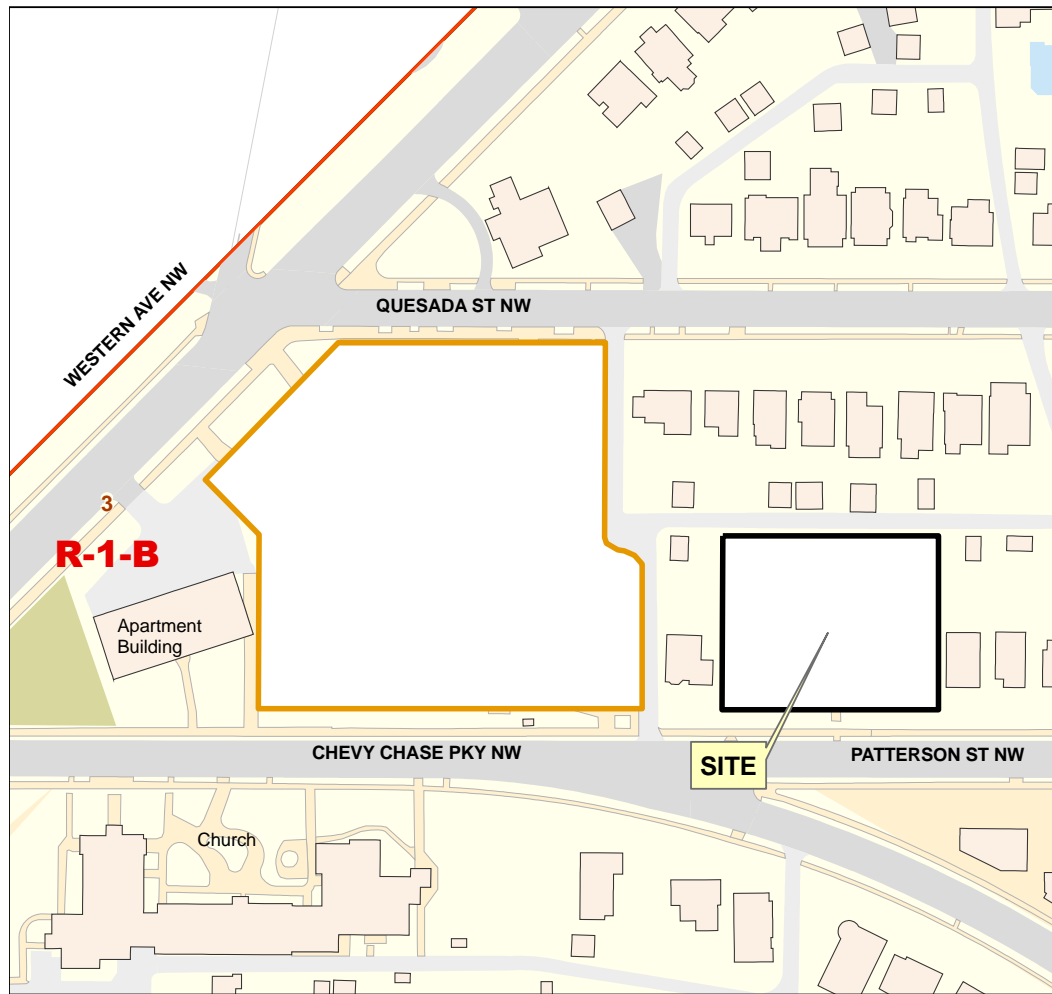
Address	3637 Patterson Street, N.W.
Legal Description	Square 1863, Lots 824, 825 & 826
Ward	3G
Lot Characteristics	Rectangular lot with alley access that slopes downward from northwest to south and east.
Existing Development	Playing field
Zoning	R-1 – Private schools and accessory uses permitted subject to special exception approval.
Adjacent Properties	East: Single-family detached dwellings. West: Single-family detached dwelling, followed by Blessed Sacrament school. North: Across public alley, single-family detached dwellings. South: Across Patterson Street, single-family detached dwellings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Residential, including churches, and commercial development to the west along Connecticut Avenue.

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant proposes to continue use of the playing field associated with Blessed Sacrament school, as approved by the Board pursuant to Order 17718 in 2008, but requests to extend the time in which the



field can be used by the school to begin at 9:00 a.m. to better align its use with the school day. Order 17718 restricts the use of the playing field to Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 a.m.



Zoning and Vicinity Map

IV. BACKGROUND

Blessed Sacrament school operates pursuant to BZA Order 16561, dated May 17, 2000. That order restricts the school to a maximum of 600 students, a maximum of 35 staff and a minimum of twenty-four off-street parking spaces. Hours of operation were approved as Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The playing field is separated from the school by a public alley and one lot, improved as a one-family dwelling. On March 6, 2008 the Board granted Application No. 17718 to permit the use of the subject property as a playing field for Blessed Sacrament School, subject to eleven conditions, as shown below:

1. The recreational playing field may be used between 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., but in no event shall the field be used after sunset.
2. No more than 90 students shall be permitted to use the field at any given time.

3. The field shall be developed in accordance with the plans filed on February 27, 2008 and included in Exhibit 35 of the record of this case, which plans show landscape buffers, the installation of a fence around the site, and the installation of two security floodlights on 10-foot poles. The applicant shall have the flexibility to substitute comparable planting based on availability, planting season and specific requests from adjacent neighbors.
4. The primary means of access to the field for students shall be the alley entrance. Kindergarten students shall have flexibility to use either Patterson Street or the alley entrance.
5. Gates shall be kept locked whenever the field is not in use by the school or other authorized party.
6. No permanent recreational structures such as baseball backstops, soccer goals, or basketball hoops shall be constructed on the field.
7. The field shall not be use for major athletic or sporting events, nor shall it be used by organized groups that are not a part of the school's educational and religious program.
8. No amplifiers, generators, compressors or other loud devices shall be used by the school on the field.
9. The school shall be permitted, but is not required, to use the field or make the field available to neighboring families during the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on weekends, holidays or other times when school is not in session, subject to any rules and restrictions imposed by the school regarding security and noise levels.
10. The school shall be responsible for maintenance of the field, including maintenance of the landscaping and removal of trash and debris from the field and the adjacent sidewalk and alley.
11. Approval shall be for THREE YEARS from the effective date of this order.

V. ZONING ANALYSIS

Section 206 – Public and Private Schools

206.2 The school shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions.

The playing field was approved in 2008 subject to eleven conditions meant to ensure that the use of this field by the Blessed Sacrament school would not become objectionable to adjoining and nearby properties. Those conditions limited the hours of use and the maximum number students that could use the field at once, in addition to the development and landscaping of the lot. With the exception of the landscaping of the southeast corner of the site, the field was developed in accordance with previous approval.

To ensure that the field continues not to be objectionable, the Office of Planning recommends that the previous conditions be continued, with modifications to conditions no. 1 and 3 to reflect the development of site, the need to complete the landscaping and the change in hours as requested by the applicant.

In order to ensure that the remainder of the landscaping is installed, the Office of Planning recommends that the application again be approved for a period of three years. The addition of the use of the playing field by one hour in the mornings, allowing use of the field to begin

at 9:00 a.m. instead of 10:00 a.m., is late enough in the morning that it should not result in an adverse effect on the neighborhood.

Below are the conditions as contained in the last order for the establishment of the playing field (BZA Order 17718), as modified by the Office of Planning. New language is shown in **bold** and deleted language in ~~strikeout~~.

1. The recreational playing field may be used between **9:00** ~~10:00~~ a.m. and 6:30 p.m., but in no event shall the field be used after sunset.

3. The field shall be ~~developed~~ **landscaped** in accordance with the ~~plans filed on February 27, 2008 and included in Exhibit 35 of the record of this case, which plans show landscape buffers, the installation of a fence around the site, and the installation of two security floodlights on 10-foot poles.~~ **Illustrative Site Plan submitted with the subject application and dated February 2008.** The applicant shall have the flexibility to substitute comparable planting based on availability, planting season and specific requests from adjacent neighbors.

206.3 *Ample parking space, but not less than that required in chapter 21 of this title, shall be provided to accommodate the students, teachers, and visitors likely to come to the site by automobile.*

The Blessed Sacrament school is required to provide a minimum of 24 off-street parking spaces, pursuant to BZA Order 16561, and based on the number of teachers and other employees at the school. The continued use of the subject property as a playing field would continue to have no effect on the number of students, teachers or visitors at the school, and therefore would not require any additional parking. Therefore, ample parking would be provided.

The Office of Planning concludes that the subject application is in conformance with the provisions of § 206, provided the landscaping shown on the Illustrative Site Plan, dated February 2008, is installed.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 3G, at its regularly scheduled meeting of May 9, 2011, voted in support of the application.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning finds the proposed application to be in conformance with the criteria contained within § 206 of the Zoning Regulations, subject to the below listed conditions to ensure that it would continue to have no adverse impacts on the surrounding community. Therefore, the Office of Planning recommends that the Board approve this special exception application to continue the use of the existing playing field, subject to the following conditions:

1. The recreational playing field may be used between 9:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., but in no event shall the field be used after sunset.
2. No more than 90 students shall be permitted to use the field at any given time.

3. The field shall be landscaped in accordance with the Illustrative Site Plan submitted with the subject application and dated February 2008. The applicant shall have the flexibility to substitute comparable planting based on availability, planting season and specific requests from adjacent neighbors.
4. The primary means of access to the field for students shall be the alley entrance. Kindergarten students shall have flexibility to use either Patterson Street or the alley entrance.
5. Gates shall be kept locked whenever the field is not in use by the school or other authorized party.
6. No permanent recreational structures such as baseball backstops, soccer goals, or basketball hoops shall be constructed on the field.
7. The field shall not be use for major athletic or sporting events, nor shall it be used by organized groups that are not a part of the school's educational and religious program.
8. No amplifiers, generators, compressors or other loud devices shall be used by the school on the field.
9. The school shall be permitted, but is not required, to use the field or make the field available to neighboring families during the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on weekends, holidays or other times when school is not in session, subject to any rules and restrictions imposed by the school regarding security and noise levels.
10. The school shall be responsible for maintenance of the field, including maintenance of the landscaping and removal of trash and debris from the field and the adjacent sidewalk and alley.
11. Approval shall be for **THREE YEARS** from the effective date of this order.

JS/sjm^{AICP}

Case Manager: Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP